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The Roman Theocracy and the Republic, 1846-1849. By R. M. JOHNSTON. (New York: The Macmillan Co. Pp. xi. 375.)

MR. JOHNSTON'S book seems to require two criticisms—a lower and a higher. On the lower plane, we can honestly commend it; on the higher, it leaves much to be desired. But perhaps we should state that by the “lower plane” we mean the painstaking statement of facts; and that by the “higher,” we mean the viewing of facts in their proper perspective, the divination of their significance, the recognition of great men and great forces, the presentation of the narrative itself in memorable form. Of all this, Mr. Johnston appears to have no proper comprehension; and we feel at times that one event is to him as important as another, and that the personages whom he describes are all of the same mediocre size.

He begins his story with a backward glance at the rise of the papacy in the Roman Empire; then proceeds to trace very briefly the growth of the papacy down to modern times; until, with the accession of Pius IX. he reaches his main theme. Thenceforward, he describes in sufficient detail each phase of Pius's illusory liberalism, which inevitably swept the Curia into the hands of the extreme Papalini, while the national movement, to which Pius had given its greatest impetus, swept not less inevitably into the hands of the extreme Democrats. The last third of the story is devoted to the short-lived Republic and its struggle against the overwhelming odds massed against it by the French. Mr. Johnston reports these matters in orderly fashion, without enthusiasm, but with evident intention of being fair. He has not only read widely the literature of the subject, but he has digested and coördinated his reading.

But was it worth while to spend the time he must have spent on his book, unless he could lift the episode itself into its proper significance? The overthrow of Pio Nono's government, the stormy interval of the Republic, and the restoration of the old régime, would certainly be of no more consequence than one of the chronic revolutions in South America, were it not that in that Roman episode two political forces of world-wide range came into collision, and that at the end, the Roman Catholic Church set itself implacably against modern progress, declaring its temporal power, the corrupt offspring of medieval times, an essential part of the Church. After the Reformation, for nearly three hundred years, the Roman Church had enjoyed a comfortable, not very active existence, until the French Revolution shook it most rudely. But only under Pio Nono, and as a result of the events described by Mr. Johnston, was it brought face to face in Rome with modern ideals—constitutional government, personal liberty, unhampered commerce, general education, religious tolerance—and after scanning them closely it pronounced them all accursed.

For a historian to chronicle this encounter without perceiving that such tremendous issues were at stake, reveals an incurable defect, which

shows itself further when Mr. Johnston criticizes the actors in this drama. Mazzini, for instance, was by no means the mediocrity here portrayed, although he unquestionably had some of the traits which Mr. Johnston describes. Nor was Garibaldi a Lilliputian. Gioberti was a man of mark, Antonelli far abler than most British statesmen of his epoch. And on the whole, did Englishmen, bred by centuries of freedom to self-reliance and courage, ever make a more gallant defense than did Mazzini and his miscellaneous corps of legionaries, who had no tradition of victory behind them, at Rome in 1849? Mr. Johnston does not fail to see the ludicrous in much of their hasty legislation, and in their exuberance of enthusiasm; but here again, he fails in the most important of an historian's attributes—sympathy. Would an Italian, who should infer that the British are a neurotic race and incapable of self-government, because he witnessed the delirious orgies in which they indulged less than two years ago at the relief of Mafeking and Ladysmith—would such a critic carry weight? Much of the misinterpretation, which on Mr. Johnston's part is unintentional, springs from deficient sympathy. Unless you seek the spirit of the Italian Revolution, you will never write a true history of it. Mr. Johnston has certainly done the utmost that a literalist could do.

The book abounds in typographical errors, especially in the proper names, and in such mistakes constantly repeated, as "*Giovane Italia*." It is also marred by slovenly expressions and split infinitives, from which an American proof-reader would have saved a careless writer. The historical student will find a larger bibliography on this episode than has been hitherto printed in English.

WILLIAM ROSCOE THAYER.

Political Nativism in New York State. By LOUIS DOW SCISCO. [Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, Vol. XIII., No. 2.] (New York: The Columbia University Press. 1901. Pp. 259.)

THIS interesting and important topic has received careful study from a competent investigator, but "leave to print" has led to the neglect of one of the chief duties of the historian—the sifting out from his material that which has no permanent interest. The book is weighted down with masses of details which have already lost their significance: there are long lists of minor and local officers in secret orders; names of candidates for a hundred different offices weary the attention; painfully precise returns in each election break the narrative at frequent intervals. A much stronger impression would have been made by far fewer statistics grouped in tables or presented graphically so that the changes in party strength might be seen at a glance. In many places the arrangement of material is mechanical, and the style is diffuse; indeed, with great advantage the study might have been shortened by a third. In a book of 250 pages, crammed with details, the omission of an index is unpardonable.